

Series I
Correspondence,
1932-1973

Box 3, Folder 11

January 9, 1959 -
April 2, 1959

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Box 4

Dear Rollo (Vice Admiral R. E. Wilson), 9 January 1959
A splendid summary of Bates' problem with Navy Department
on B.E. Group work.

After reading Bates' papers for the last few weeks and recalling my many conversations with him from 1947 to 1973, I feel sure that those who discontinued his work never put their real thoughts in writing but instead expressed them orally in a manner that would best screen their personal opposition to Bates' work.

H. E. Eccles October, 1975

See also Dear Dick (Conolly) of 20 January 1959--same topic.
Particularly discussion of Halsey's decisions

Dear Joe (Captain J. J. Sullivan), 28 February 1959
Splendid statement of Bates' attitude plus some factual
connections to Admiral Sam Morison's book on Leyte.

Dear Sam (Morison), 27 April 1959
Excellent letter on Morison's history of Leyte and
Vice Admiral Oldendorf's pique.

Dear Joe (Sullivan), 8 May 1959
Continuation of Oldendorf--Morison

Gentlemen (Pennsylvania Magazine of History), 18 May 1959
Case of Augustus Buell, "The Fraudulent Historian"
and John Paul Jones

Dear Swede (Overesch), 22 May 1959
Comments on start of Global Strategy discussions at
War College in 1949

Dear Admiral Pratt, 10 June 1959
More about Augustus Buell and John Paul Jones

Dear Judge (Eller), 15 June 1959
Admiral Carney and Leyte history

Dear Jack (Bergen), 16 July 1959
 Recommending Vice Admiral Ingersoll for a job

Gentlemen--to Navy Marine Corps 23 July 1959
Gift of chair dedicated to Admiral Conolly

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To Commander Tuleja, 24 July 1958 .

Controversial aspects of Midway--Squadron Commanders, etc.

Tuleja later held a chair at the Naval War College.

Dear Mick (Carney), 26 August 1959

Comments on death of Halsey and his qualities

Dear Lieutenant Kiker, 30 October 1959

Comments on Kiker's book about Newport Strangers on the Shore (Douglas Kiker--news and TV correspondent and commentator)

To Admiral Spruance, 10 December 1959

Long important discussion of Battle of Surigao and actions of various commanders.

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12 Mount Vernon Street
Newport, Rhode Island
9 January 1959

Dear Rollo:

I certainly enjoyed my talk with you over the telephone the other day because, as usual, you show an understanding of our basic problems which too few people in the services have.

The study of history and the battle lessons for the future which can be achieved from such history, is a most important item in the education of young officers and even older ones. I have expounded on this to a degree in the letters to Admiral Felt and others which I am forwarding herewith. You will note that Admiral Conolly has written on it at great length, but as you see his recommendations were not accepted.

I have been quite concerned about the closing up of the World War II Battle Evaluation Group because what we are doing has been recognized as most unusual and most worthy. However, Admiral Burke says that it had to be closed for budgetary reasons and who am I to say that this was not the real reason. However, other officers have given other reasons. You have heard some of these other reasons here in Newport. Among these reasons are: (a) It is not wise to criticize the top commanders while they are alive. (This reason actually has no standing because it came up in 1947-48, and was considered unworthy of real attention.) (b) Officers moving into high position do not like having their wartime operations analyzed and battle lessons produced thereon. (While this fact may be true it seems to me that it is proper that, if officers in action have, or have not, done well, the facts should be known to the high command.) (c) The personnel were required elsewhere. (This does not appear to be a true statement because Admiral Holloway, Chief of the Bureau of Personnel, just before he left for England asked me if I was going to be given a contract by the War College. He would not have suggested this if he had any thought that the personnel were required for other duty or that budgetary reasons would interfere.) (d) BuPers doesn't like to have me on active duty. (My reply to this is that every President of the War College, including Admiral Ingersoll, has wanted me on active duty and has told me so when the annual battle regarding my retention came up. However, some years ago when BuPers thought that they would be unable to retain me on active duty they requested me to take a contract once it became necessary to retire. I still have that contract in my drawer.)

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As a matter of information you should know that for years there has always been a group in the Navy Department anxious to suppress me. My original draft of my first volume, The Battle of the Coral Sea, was lost in BuPers and it took Admiral Forrest Sherman, Chief of Naval Operations, to force BuPers to find it and print it.

I don't know what is back of this whole thing! You can take whatever you will as the reason. Suffice it to say that the section has now been folded, although the Chief of Naval History, Admiral Eller, is anxious to reopen it again since there is so much to be learned from Leyte.

You have asked me what the maximum number of personnel in this section was at any time. My reply is: two Captains, two Commanders, one Chief Quartermaster, one Chief Yeoman, and one or two lesser yeoman, depending on the nature of the project at the time. I have been down to a very small staff and then again my staff has been in between. My system of operation was to put my two Commanders (aviators) working on a rough draft of the Japanese operations in the continuity field. This embraced the dispatches, the decisions, the movements of forces, day by day. I then had one Captain -- sometimes two -- plotting the action and writing drafts of the various forces in the next phase of the battle, so that I would have no delay once I had finished with what I was working on at the moment. During the period when I had two Commanders working on the continuity, I had Captain J.C. Titus working on the Battle of Surigao Strait, and Captain H.M.S. Gimber working on Admiral Halsey's operations (Commander Third Fleet) as well as on CTF 38's operations and on the Japanese parallel operations as well. Unfortunately this latter officer (who was a communications expert) was retired because of cancer and a slight heart attack. I did not obtain a relief.

I do not recall that BuPers has asked at any time recently how long it would take me to complete this assignment. Admiral Ingersoll asked me and I told him that I didn't know. He asked me if I could get it done in one year; that would have been June 30 1959. I told him that I could not and explained why. I pointed out that our staff would be transferred elsewhere and that it took a long time for new members of the staff to become acquainted with the background. In all of this time I have been the "continuity." The work here is done by individuals, and if any individual is poor or slow, the product will be delayed. This has happened recently. I had a Commander working for about two years on the Battle of Surigao Strait. Before he had completed the task he was sent to sea. This meant that his successor had to start all over again in reviewing the work and pick up the loose ends. I thereby lost, at the minimum, one year and a half.

This is a most difficult situation, but I think that with your analytical mind, and your experience and understanding, you can appreciate what I am talking about.

When I found that my section was going to be folded and that this order came from the highest echelon, I refrained from writing about it or taking any action because, if I "get an order I obey it the best I can." Nevertheless, there was considerable agitation to do something about it. I know one prominent citizen who wrote to the Secretary of Defense (an old friend) and at least one senator was asked to help. I refused to give support to any of these movements on the ground that the decision was the C.N.O.'s. It now seems quite possible that, while the decision was the C.N.O.'s, it was only after a long series of arguments on the lower level and the final decision was based largely on BuPers recommendations. (Admiral Conolly stated that the main trouble was that the officers concerned with my section in the Navy Department do not appreciate the high quality of my product nor do they really know what I am doing.)

I was very regretful when the section folded because I was just moving into the October 25th decisions of Admirals Halsey, Kinkaid and Sprague. It had been my plan once I had completed the whole thing to prepare battle lessons to cover everything. All of this seems to have died.

If I can be of any further help to you in the matter, I will hold myself at your service.

The papers enclosed herewith are for you and you may keep them.

Best regards and hopes that you can accomplish something in the matter, I am

R. W. BATES

Vice Admiral R. E. Wilson, USN
Room 4E606 Pentagon
Department of the Navy
Washington 25, D. C.

12 Mount Vernon St.
Newport, R. I.

January 13, 1959

Commander A. Brooks Harlow, USNR-R
135 Broadway
New York, N. Y.

Dear Brooks:

Although a little belated I want to tell you how pleased I was to be one of your honor guests at the annual dinner given by your Commandery of the Naval Order of the United States. I would have written to you long before this but I have been so busy closing out my office here at the War College and closing up shop, to say nothing of completing the Battle for Leyte Gulf, that I am only now turning to my personal correspondence.

I thought your dinner was up to the highest standard of the past and, therefore, very enjoyable. I have been at a number of these dinners, having been invited originally by Admiral Edward Kalbfus. I always enjoy the pleasant atmosphere of your organization for here we, to whom their Country means a great deal, gather.

This certainly applies to you, for in my association with you I have noted this very important attribute. Running an order such as the Naval Order of the United States is not easy and takes a lot of time. You have been willing to devote your time to accomplish what you deem to be a worthwhile end in support of our national security. Naturally, it is a worthwhile end and I am glad to say that under your able guidance it is continuing to present to all the high character of its founders and the high objectives of its members.

I am hoping to go to California for a few months to visit the members of my family, after which I plan to return to Newport and survey the field.

With best wishes for the New Year and with many thanks for your thoughtfulness in including me as one of your guests, I am, as ever,

Most sincerely,

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret)

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12 Mount Vernon St.
Newport, R. I.

January 13, 1958

Dear George:

I cannot begin to tell you how pleased I was to receive your Christmas message wherein you stated that you and Mrs. Murphy and your children wish me happiness in the New Year. It was very thoughtful of you and I was very happy to receive it.

I want you to know that--although I don't think that I acknowledged it--I was very pleased to note your success in the Pacific during World War II. Your commendation signed by Jack Towers--who was a pretty tough commander--is very fine. Your judicial training and apparently your understanding of naval operations, helped in part by your course at the Naval War College, made you highly effective. I, of course, remember you well here at the War College in the early days of 1942, and I remember also that your brother, the eminent Justice of the Supreme Court was quite proud of you also. I recall that he was up here frequently and it was through your kindness that I had the pleasure of meeting him. He was recognized as an outstanding jurist and it was really too bad that the Creator took him before his time.

For your information my office has been called the World War II Battle Evaluation Group. It had been in operation since the war. We were writing critical analyses of the conduct of the major naval battles of World War II in the Pacific. We had analyzed three, the Battles of the Coral Sea, Midway and Savo Island, and were well into the Battle for Leyte Gulf when we were suppressed, according to the Chief of Naval Operations, because of budgetary reasons. We think that this may not be the reason and so do most senior flag officers. The general feeling is that it had to do with the criticisms for and against, which I freely put into my writings. However, no one really knows exactly what was behind it.

I am delighted that you have done so well in the Law. I would imagine that being a judge of your prominence in the great city of Detroit is nothing to be "sneezed at", to use a colloquial expression.

Some day I will be in your area and will look you up. I have never been to Detroit.

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With best regards to you and yours, and with best wishes for a
very prosperous New Year, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

Honorable George Murphy
The Recorder's Court
1321 St. Antoine St.
Detroit 26, Mich.

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12 Mount Vernon St.
Newport, R. I.

January 13, 1958

(1959!)

Dear Jack:

I have been wanting to reply to your letter of December 16, but I have been so busy working here, even on night shift, to finish Volume V of the Battle for Leyte Gulf that I was unable to acknowledge your letter.

First, I want to say that you most definitely trounced me at pool and I noted it with great concern. Frankly, I think that both you and Enos were far above me that day. However, we play with ivory balls in Newport, whereas we played with plastic balls at the Metropolitan.

I appreciate greatly your remarks concerning my naval service. In return I can say that you are one of my great friends and I delight in your accomplishments as much as those of anyone else I know. I don't believe that there is anyone who could have been a better Head of the Navy League than you, and I know that you have done this at considerable financial loss. I am sure everyone will regret your departure.

As a reserve officer you have also given of your time. I know there was considerable concern when the selection board reached down and selected you, but I think that it must be admitted today that it was a wise decision.

You will be interested to know that there is considerable discussion in Admiral Halsey's wartime staff, and notably with Admiral Halsey himself on the writeup given his operations in Admiral Morison's Volume "Leyte". I think Morison writes very well, and all of my officers say that, in general, his facts are correct insofar as my office is concerned. You know he is extended the privilege of my volumes and he uses them to a degree. However, the basic source for the Leyte volume seems to have been a study made by Henry Salomon during 1947-48.

I have been visited here by Vice Admiral Rollo Wilson, who was operations officer for Admiral Halsey, and by Rear Admiral Ham Dow, who was communications officer. They are very unhappy that my Battle Evaluation Group has been closed. Admiral Wilson, who is Op-04 in the Navy Department, asked me to send him all of the papers relating to its closing. He wants to see if he can't get Burke to reopen the section and finish, at least, the Battle for Leyte Gulf. So, I sent him the papers

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last Friday and he should have them today. I think that they feel that Sam Morison's comment on Halsey's operations is not the correct version. They didn't tell me exactly what was bothering them, but they said it had made Admiral Halsey quite ill.

I am hoping, in the next few days, to read Morison's book to see where I disagree with him, if at all. I cannot judge his comments on Admiral Halsey's operations on October 25th, as my book stops just as the critical operations started. This, in itself, concerns Admiral Wilson who thinks there must have been some ulterior reason for closing my section. He does not think that it was (a) budgetary, (b) the need for personnel, (c) the opinion that I didn't give a completion date, or (d) many other reasons given by various commanders.

I did not go to California over Christmas because I was so smothered here that we worked up to Christmas Day and immediately thereafter. Fortunately, the Volume was completed on schedule.

I am going to California this month and will stay out there for a while. I just want to rest for a couple of months, as I must say that I tired myself out working on this book so long and so hard to receive what Tommy Robbins calls "the axe".

With best regards to you and to your family, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

Rear Admiral J. J. Bergen, USNR
40 Wall St.
New York, N. Y.

0269

January 14, 1959

Dear Judge:

In accordance with your recommendations we are sending you the microfilm you asked for. I hope that you will understand what to do with it. I think that it is highly interesting and I think you will too. I certainly don't think that it is complete, although those who made it believe that it is.

For your information, Vice Admiral Rollo Wilson came up here and made a speech on logistics which was very well received. Rollo has always been a very able naval officer. He talked to me over the telephone about the folding of my section. He was very concerned about it and asked me to send him a lot of papers thereon; which I did. Among these papers were my letters to Felt and others. What he is going to do about it, if anything, I do not know, but he says that he and Halsey's wartime staff are very unhappy about the closing of the section as they don't like Morison's comments on these operations and they had hoped to see what I arrived at here.

I am sending you as an enclosure, a copy of my forwarding letter.

It might be that, if the pressure gets strong enough, the job may be finished after all. With Halsey up in the air, and the Chief of History aroused, perhaps something can be done about it. If Admiral Ingersoll feels that he doesn't like it here at the Naval War College, for example, it might be well to move somewhere else. Admiral Conolly offered to take it on at Long Island University but this was turned down by Burke on the ground that budgetary requirements were such that he did not feel warranted in spending the money. So there you are!

Sam Morison is here and has been here for the past several days. He looks fine!

With best regards to you and hoping that all is well, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

Rear Admiral E. M. Eller, USN (Ret)
Room 1210, Main Navy Building
Washington 25, D. C.

0270

12 Mt. Vernon St.
Newport, R.I.

16 January 1959

Dear Captain Finnigan:

This morning I wrote you a letter relative to a Mrs. C. Oliver O'Donnell. I now wish to write you a letter relative to the wife of a Commander in the Navy. This lady seems to think that I have great contacts which can cause even the great oysters to open their shells. What she wants to know is: "Do you happen to know about scholarships which are available to children whose fathers are in the Armed Forces."

I don't know, frankly, whether you are the one to handle this, but I am quite confident that you are able to direct it into the proper channels. This query comes because this Commander's wife has five children, and universities being as expensive as they are, additional help is often required, largely in the form of scholarships.

With hopes that you can provide me with some information in this regard, I am, in deep appreciation,

Yours very sincerely,

R. W. BATES
RADM, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Captain O.D. Finnigan, USN
Chief of Naval Personnel (Pers G--Room 1803)
Navy Department (Arlington Annex)
Washington 25, D.C.

0271

12 Mt. Vernon St.
Newport, R.I.

16 January 1959

Dear Captain Finnigan:

It is nice to write to an old War College graduate, as it is possible that one might be remembered; and since today happens to be my birthday and several people have remembered me, I hope that you will do so, also. WADM George Towner was here today--that is, at the Naval War College, and I asked him with whom I should communicate relative to the widow of C. Oliver O'Donnell, of the Class of 1920, signal number 55992. Mrs. O'Donnell has come to me to find out whether as the widow of LCDR O'Donnell she is entitled to any retirement, either financial or in the Commissary, or matters of that kind.

Mrs. O'Donnell's situation seems somewhat peculiar. Her husband, who graduated as I said in 1920, resigned in 1923. He entered the USNR (IVS) in 1934 with, I presume, the rank of a Lieutenant. He was recalled to active duty as a LCDR on September 26, 1939. He got a heart attack while on active duty in April 1940. He was placed on the honorary retired list with pay on June 24, 1940.

The reason for his being retired without pay was that he hoped to get better--he realized that we would possibly be in war and he hoped to be strong enough to be recalled to active duty so he gave up the question of pay. This was a great error, for he died in January 1941, not even one year after he retired.

I would appreciate your kindness if you would have one of your assistants look into this case to see what, if anything, accrues to his widow, Mrs. C. Oliver O'Donnell, of LeRoy Avenue, Newport, R.I.

With very best regards to you and the hope that things are going along well in BuPers and particularly in your section, which clearly must handle the most difficult problems of morale, I am, with best wishes for the New Year,

Yours most sincerely,

R.W. BATES
RADM, U.S. Navy (RWB)

Captain O.D. Finnigan, USN
Chief of Naval Personnel (Pers G--Room 1803)
Navy Department (Arlington Annex)
Washington 25, D.C.

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19 January 1959

Dear Roger:

Here I am bothering you again! I should appreciate your courtesy very much if you would send one of your usual gifts (cost to me of about \$20.00) to:

Miss Harriette Goodwillie Hodges
Elk Hill
Forest, Virginia

Although I think that you have sufficient cards in stock I am enclosing one, anyway.

The tray for the LeRoy Kings was very well received. Evidently it is a beauty, for which I give you thanks.

I am almost folded in this job. Am planning to go to California for a few months, and thence to return here, probably in April.

With many thanks for your many kindnesses to me, I am as ever,

Yours sincerely,

R. W. BATES
RADM, U.S. NAVY (Ret)

Mr. Roger Hallowell
c/o Reed and Barton
Taunton, Mass.

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12 Mount Vernon Street
Newport, Rhode Island
19 January 1959

Dear Captain Kitamura:

I want to thank you for your lovely Christmas card and to tell you that we all think a lot of you around here and remember you with friendly appreciation.

As you know Captain Nagai is here now and I have talked to him on two or three occasions about Japanese-American operations in the Philippines during the war. He is a very fine gentleman and has been very helpful to us all. In this connection I am reminded of Captain Itaya who was here last year and to whom I hope you will pass on my best regards.

I am glad that you are now in the office of the Chief of Naval Operations. It is a difficult assignment and clearly a tribute to your intellectual powers. I was also glad to note that you were in our country this year and sorry that you were not able to visit the College. However, one month is not much time to accomplish everything. I am happy to note that your daughters are growing up happily and that your family still remembers me and the doll.

For your information my office has been closed and I am preparing to leave the War College after about thirteen years of steady duty. I enjoyed my duty at the Naval War College and hope that I contributed toward the national welfare.

Best regards to you and your family and very best wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely,

R. W. BATES

Captain K. Kitamura
1024-4 Issiki, Hayama-cho,
Miura-gun, Kanagawa-ken,
Japan

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12 Mount Vernon Street
Newport, Rhode Island
19 January 1959

Dear Captain Yi:

I want to thank you very much for that wonderful Christmas card you sent me from Korea. It is very pretty and makes snow look lovely, whereas snow in general to me is not a pleasant sight. This is not because it isn't pretty but because I always think of the problems which it entails. Fortunately, we have had practically no snow this winter here in the Newport area. On the other hand, we have had something almost as bad -- we have had 0° weather with 40 knot winds and this has continued for some time.

My office here has now been folded and I have returned to the retired list having completed 47 years of naval service.

I want to wish you all happiness for the New Year and with very best regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Captain Kyongwon, Yi
ROK Naval War College
Chinhae, Korea

0275

12 Mount Vernon Street
Newport, Rhode Island
20 January 1959

Dear Dick:

I am still here in Newport because they are folding up the office and many of the papers had to be separated. Also, and this is what I am really writing to you about, Admiral Halsey appears to have been very upset over what Morison wrote about his operations in the Leyte affair. The rumor is that he went to the hospital after reading what Morison had to say about him. That this seems to be a fact is verified to a degree by his former communications officer, RADM. Ham Dow, USN, now retired, now with Westinghouse Company, and by VADM. Rollo Wilson, USN, now Op-04 in the Navy Department. Both of them had long talks with me at different times over the whole Leyte operation and they were particularly concerned that my section had been folded.

Admiral Wilson said that he couldn't understand why it was folded at the very time that I was about to study the operations off Samar and Cape Engano. I told him that I did not know -- that I had endeavored to explain that the section was being folded at the most vital period of its existence and that various reasons had been given for folding it; none of which seem to be true. To this, Vice Admiral Wilson said that he felt that it had been stopped for some ulterior reason and that he was going to find out what that was.

He asked me to send my correspondence relating to closing of the section and I took the liberty of sending him both your letter to Admiral Burke and Admiral Burke's reply.

I had thought originally that BuPers was back of it all but now there are rumors that senior naval aviators who do not seem to want the carrier operations at Leyte discussed any further are responsible. The new Secretary of the Naval War College, Captain Wulzen, told me -- and I don't know that he wants it to be quoted -- that it is his understanding that it was a cabal of the aviators started apparently by Admiral Smith of BuPers and supported by Admiral Ingersoll, President of the Naval War College. Admiral Felt who at the time was Vice CNO seems to have come in on it later. Whatever the reason, the section was closed and I doubt if it will ever reopen.

However, Admiral Wilson indicates that some action may be taken in the matter at Admiral Halsey's direct request. He infers that they feel that Sam Morison wrote his volume without

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all of the facts and they would like the facts brought out so that their actions may have more rationality than is indicated by Morison's volume.

I told them that I did not know what I would say as I had not gotten that far in my evaluations, but I went on to say that there were many notable extenuating circumstances among which were the (a) air strikes on Japan scheduled for the 12th of November, (b) the strong belief that the Japanese operations were to be of the Tokyo Express type, and (c) fact that orders directed him to destroy any major enemy naval forces interfering with the operation. There are other reasons, also. However, it seems from here that because of these facts it should be possible to analyze Halsey's mental processes fairly accurately at the time he decided to move north, and his later operations.

At the present moment I am planning to go to California in about two weeks to remain for a couple of months. The doctors feel that I have been working too hard which, of course, is true. I have worked, even though not on active duty, every day including Saturday and some nights in order to finish the book as I had agreed to do. This agreement was reached before my retirement and a staff was held over to assist me. This staff has now been dissolved and I am all that remains in the office.

Whether anything comes out of this or not, the big lesson is that Aesop was right when he said, "Look before you leap." Here on the one hand we had most of the top commanders asking that the section be kept operative and that the work be finished and, on the other hand, we had a little group in Washington refusing the request. Think of the people who wanted to keep it open -- Nimitz, Conolly, Garney, Stump, Wright, Halsey, and possibly Kinkaid, not to mention numerous others. The Navy League suggested taking action and the Naval Reserve Officers from all over the country wanted to take action, but I turned them all down on the ground that, if the Chief of Naval Operations wanted it closed, who was I to take action against him. I now feel that perhaps Burke did not know anything about it but was told that it was essential to keep within the budget.

I hope that you and Helen have had a very merry Christmas season and that you are starting the New Year with a lot of happiness. I was glad to talk to you on Christmas day and to know that you had received my little remembrance. I was glad to send it because I don't know any couple anywhere to whom I feel more closely allied than I do to the R.L.C.s.

I have always wanted to apologize to you for speaking to George Hughey at your home relative to helicopters, but from all I hear about him I feel that he is highly intelligent and

therefore might be helpful in determining whether the helicopter concerned was good or bad.

I hear that there is a tendency on the part of the big firms and their associates in the military establishment to push aside any new development for the sake of continuity. I hope it isn't so but I have feelings that perhaps it is.

As I said before, I hope to go to California in early February and remain for several months. I desire to obtain some good California sunshine.

With my warmest regards to you both, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Admiral R. L. Conolly, USN, Ret'd.
President, Long Island University
385 Flatbush Avenue Extension
Brooklyn 1, New York

12 Mount Vernon Street
Newport, Rhode Island
22 January 1959

Dear Joe:

Recently you have sent me several letters which touched upon your appreciation of my problems of today and my successes, and perhaps on occasion, failures. I have been very pleased to hear from you and to realize that your opinion of me measures up to the high opinion I have of you. I am not going to say too much about this here because I will be in California where I plan to stay for several months. At this time I hope to see more of you than you perhaps desire.

I don't think they will ever name a building at the War College after me. I appreciate the effort that you and many others have made to accomplish this but the example of the portrait is along the same line. Normally, buildings in the Navy are never named after an officer, until he is dead.

I have been working since July 31st here at the War College "at no expense to the government." I did this because it was essential that my book be finished by December 31st and, as you know, Captain Titus was slow. Therefore it seemed doubtful to me that it would be completed on schedule and that if completed it might not be up to the high standard of the past volumes. So the Navy Department held on duty Captain Titus, the Chief Yeoman, and an additional secretary, and I came here every day as I am still doing. The end result is that our volume has gone to Washington to be published. Captain Titus did the plotting and I think he did a fine job. He has now been transferred to the hospital and will retire very shortly.

The row that we thought would develop once the section was folded seems to be appearing. Admiral Halsey is very upset by Sam Morison's book on Leyte. I have not studied Morison's book so I cannot comment but everyone thinks that I was suppressed for an ulterior reason -- what the reason was I do not know. Vice Admiral Rollo Wilson, now Op-04 (Logistics) in the Navy Department, has been up here to see me and has asked for my papers relative to the folding of the section. There seems to be a hope on the part of Admiral E.M. (Judge) Eller, the Historian of the Navy, that the Navy will decide to reopen the section. I doubt this, but I have been hanging around in order to answer queries. I had a long talk with him yesterday over the phone and he stated that there is hope that something will be done.

Our weather has not been too good. It varies from 0°F. to about 35°F. I have survived rather well but I have a cold, largely in my nasal passage. The doctors have suggested that

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I get "the hell out of here" for a couple of months and, since that is what I had planned, I am going to do it. When I arrive in California I will give you a call.

My friend Howard Cole from Iceland -- you remember Cole, he was in my office -- wrote me a letter which he ended with the following, "You're a tough old goat but you are the ablest officer I ever served with or ever expect to."

With this modest remark I will sign off. Very best regards.

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

0280

12 Mount Vernon Street
Newport, Rhode Island
23 January 1959

Dear Howard:

I received your very interesting letter and promptly showed it to Admiral Ingersoll. Naturally I didn't show the whole thing since your brush with Brush was really none of his business but is a personal matter between you and the Navy Department.

The Admiral was delighted with your analysis of the Iceland situation and said that it was a very remarkable presentation by you and that, of course, you are right. He has known of the situation as presented by you for a long time. What surprised him was how quickly you analyzed the situation and arrived at what he said was a very fine analysis. I told the Admiral that I would like him to notify the Navy Department that you should be given a desk where you could give the government the advantage of your mental powers. I suggested the Iceland desk but the Admiral says there is no such thing really. I then suggested a NATO desk in Europe. I shall stress this again shortly with him. As a matter of fact when I told the Admiral to do this he promptly grabbed the phone and called Washington then promptly discussed something else. However, and this is important, the Admiral says that you must get sea duty if you are to go anywhere. I think that this was a general statement rather than you in particular. However, it grew out of you!

At the present moment I am not concerned about you at all. Your problem is that you are mentally superior to many and it irritates them. You must handle yourself with a little more circumspection. I look forward to your promotion to Captain and I shall accept nothing else.

I plan to go to California in a matter of days at which time I will fold here at the War College for good, unless they decide to reopen the section. This seems doubtful although there is considerable agitation about it brought on by Admiral Halsey who is upset about Morison's volume. Our Volume Five is being studied at this moment.

I was somewhat surprised at your parting remark in your letter in which you referred to me as a "tough old goat." The toughness only occurs when those with a job to do either don't do it, or do it improperly, in which case the maestro takes charge. Your final line of friendly remarks about my

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competence were appreciated and I am glad to say that I have heard them before. Only yesterday I received a long distance call from California from a former sergeant in the Marines on the Minneapolis in 1944. He wanted to talk to me about the Minneapolis and wanted me to write some lessons about the war. He stated that some of my former CPOs are in Los Angeles and whenever they get together on occasion my name always comes up and the remarks made are always friendly. All I can say is "time cures all."

Best regards to you and sincerest hopes that all goes well with you and yours.

Sincerely,

R. W. Bates

CDR. Howard Cole, USN
H.Q. IDF
APO 81, New York, N. Y.

0282

12 Mount Vernon Street
Newport, Rhode Island
23 January 1959

Dear George:

Thank you very much for the magazine relative to your brother Frank. I shall read it with great interest and return it, as I realize that it is your personal property. It should be extremely interesting.

I was interested to note that you are still a reserve on an inactive status. Most of my friends of your time have been retired without pay. What you have to do to remain on inactive duty I do not know, but I think that you have to fulfill some requirements. I would suggest that you reply to the notice from the Bureau giving your wishes in the matter and asking them what you have to do to remain on an inactive status.

A very interesting thing has occurred in this town. A friend of mine thought that he was retired without pay in 1943 because he could not pass the physical examination. The matter came to light last November and I told him to write to Washington about it. They discovered that he has ten years back pay coming! While this is not a large sum it is a nice addition to anyone's pocketbook. I wouldn't be surprised with your service of at least sixteen years, possibly more, you are entitled to some retirement pay after you reach the age of sixty-five. What I am saying to you is purely guesswork but approximately right.

I have ordered through our tailor in town the Legion lapel bar which will be sent to you very shortly. I am going to leave the War College for good in a matter of days now. I am going to California for a couple of months and then plan to return to Newport and see what the situation is.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

R. W. Bates

Judge George Murphy
The Recorder's Court of Detroit
1321 St. Antoine Street
Detroit 26, Michigan

0283

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : CAPT.E.L.ROBERTSON

DATE: 27 Jan 1959

FROM : RADM R.W.BATES,USN (ret)

SUBJECT: Absence from apartment

1. For your information I am departing for California on Wednesday, January 28th, to be gone as a guest for several months.
2. I am enclosing a check for my rent for the month of February and I will forward additional checks so long as I am away.
3. My maid, Mrs. Alice King, of 7 Marchant Street--who you have employed on occasions, will be looking out for the apartment and you may consult with her should any matters arise. In this connection, 2 water pipes in the pantry which are showing signs of marked deterioration should be removed or replaced.
4. Here's hoping all goes well with you and yours.

R.W.BATES

0284

12 Mount Vernon Street
Newport, Rhode Island
28 January 1959

Dear Arleigh:

I received your recent letter relative to my completion of Volume V of the Battle for Leyte Gulf with a great deal of pleasure. My pleasure springs not so much from the fact that you are the Chief of Naval Operations but more correctly from the fact that it was from you--Arleigh Burke. I recognize your great qualities of leadership, your understanding of warfare and the factors which contribute to success and failure therein, your increasing success in the field of morale and finally your dedication to your service and country. You are well loved by all!

Your comments relative to my voluntary work on Volume V are appreciated. It is quite true that I have worked long and hard since my retirement to complete the volume, but why not? I had started it long ago, I had brought it almost to completion, and I could not allow it to die.

You refer to my dedication. I feel that one of the great weaknesses in the military today is the lack of dedication. Instead of considering the military service as a career, many consider it simply as a job to be dropped at the slightest sign of something which may appear financially better. Loyalty to ship, service, and country is in many cases of no consequence. You have done much to improve this situation but it still exists.

In addition to this morale factor, you have a singularly difficult problem in the education of the officer personnel. Let me quote in part from a letter from one of my former officers. After commenting to me on the fact that I had constantly inculcated in him the necessity, while at the Naval War College, to increase (a) his brain power--his ability to reason logically, and (b) his knowledge of his profession (including of course all services therein) he stated:

"They don't take this assignment seriously enough. They fail to make up through application the deficiencies in their own background and education. They are not prepared to handle properly the sensitive issues that arise and as a result a few are overburdened rectifying in many instances the errors of others. An officer should be trained for this job, if he has one of the important ones. It is almost criminal not to adequately prepare every officer who is sent here

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to a key billet. He must have certain pre-requisite experience and he should have special training for this assignment. Here the political, sociological and economic aspects of the problems cannot be clearly discriminated from the purely military ones. We are poorly trained for these extra-military aspects of the job."

I know that sometime this year you will be relieved from your present assignment and will then have to make a decision as to whether to accept an appointment in civil life or to remain in the active Navy. It is my fervent hope that you will decide to remain on, perhaps as SACLANT. Here your great qualities which have helped preserve our nation during the present tough years can be equally effective in preparing our forces for instant and powerful action.

If this, for reasons unknown to me, does not appeal, have you ever thought of heading up one of these civilian study groups for at least one year where you might well have an opportunity to write about and to discuss the (a) problems of your many years of naval service and (b) many lessons thereon which you consider all of importance for today and tomorrow?

With many thanks for your kind letter, I am, as always,

Yours sincerely,

R. W. BATES

Admiral Arleigh Burke, USN
Room 4E628 Pentagon
Washington, 25, D. C.

0286

121 Mount Vernon Street
Newport, Rhode Island
28 January 1959

Dear Rollo:

Judge Eller informed me over the telephone the other day that he had taken my completed draft of Volume V of the Battle for Leyte Gulf, had looked at it himself, and then had given it to you for further study. If nothing else comes of this I will know that one of our top Admirals and the Chief of History have both studied the volume to a degree and are familiar with the mental processes involved. I hope that you find it up to the high standards which I have endeavored to reach in the past.

I am sorry that I had to bypass Volume IV which was to be the continuity volume for, in this volume, I had planned to comment more fully on the problems facing the commanders during the important hours of the 24th and 25th.

However, in Volume V, I have touched on those problems and where possible made a point thereon. I had originally planned to write the 24th for the whole day but the time factor of having to be finished by the end of the year made this impractical.

As I wrote Admiral Conolly the other day there are a lot of factors which affected Admiral Halsey's decision, and these factors are nowhere explained. Realizing that these factors might well have an effect on later decisions I stressed them heavily in all of my preceding volumes. Not the least of these was (a) the idea of Tokyo Express operations which permeated all Commands, (b) the basic orders which stated roughly that, should an enemy force appear, the destruction of that force became the prime objective of Commander Third Fleet, (c) the fact that the Third Fleet was to strike Japan on October 12th, (d) the relation of this Japanese Carrier Force to the above operation, as well as numerous other factors. All should have been presented somewhere.

I think that the word "decoy" as used by ^{SOME} my writers had a large part to do with some of the adverse comment throughout the nation and the world. Perhaps if some other word could have been used the situation might not have become so controversial nor would preconceived notions have become facts.

I am on my way to California for a couple of months holiday. My address will be the Bohemian Club, Post and Taylor Streets, San Francisco. Since I am out on the coast merely for a holiday and to endeavor to shake a cold which I obtained

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three months ago and which hangs on, according to my doctors, because I overworked somewhat on Volume V and made myself susceptible to a virus--I am available for a call at any time, if my services are required in Washington to discuss anything on this matter.

Very frankly I think the battle study should have been finished and I feel that the question of the size of the staff has been allowed to overpower the many other favorable factors. It is a matter of personal record with me that at the time the section was to be folded, the Chief of Naval Personnel mentioned a shortage of captains and how they couldn't be spared for my office. I told him that this surprised me because a few months before Captain Moncure, the detail officer, had told me that captains were dripping out of his ears. I know that there are excess captains (aviation) right now for whom BuPers is seeking billets.

I trust Admiral Burke. I consider him very highly principled and I am quite ready to stand by his decision, but I do hope that the advice he receives is correct so that his decision may also be correct.

In making a comment about the Chief of Naval Personnel above, I want it distinctly understood that Admiral Paige Smith had recently taken over, and I think that he was a victim of a kind of cabal in the Bureau which cabal objected to (a) having me on duty, and (b) commenting on command decisions even though such comment might serve the nation well.

I certainly hope that Admiral Halsey is improving. I am impressed with the loyalty of his entire staff toward him. Clearly he is a leader of men!

With best regards, I am, as ever

R. W. BATES

Vice Admiral R. E. Wilson, USN
Room 4E606 Pentagon
Department of the Navy
Washington 25, D. C.

0288

Bohemian Club
624 Taylor Street
San Francisco, California
February 24, 1959

Captain J. Joseph Sullivan, USNR
111 Sutter Street, Room 429
San Francisco 4, California

Dear Joe:

It was very nice to come direct from Sacramento the other day and to have you as my guest at the Bohemian Club for the Thursday night jinx. You are quite a fellow, and I was delighted to note how many Bohemians not only knew you, but were anxious to shake your hand.

I enjoyed the whole affair; but I was a little bit upset at your remarks wherein you stated that Admiral Oldendorf had made some critical remarks about me and Admiral Morison.

You offered to show me the letter, but I must refuse to see it. It is not only a personal communication between you and Admiral Oldendorf, but it also is something I prefer not to know about. I don't want to feel that my old commander was in any way angry at me; for I thought him a fine leader, and I enjoyed my service with him greatly.

It is my understanding that he is a little bit peeved over Morison's book on Leyte and presumably over some friendly remarks made by Admiral Morison about me.

For your information, I had nothing to do directly with Admiral Morison's book on Leyte. He had the privilege of my volumes, but I did not see his. He sent some notes up to Captain Titus, who was running my office, and Captain Titus checked them for accuracy.

However, it must be stressed here that my work is entirely different from that of Admiral Morison's; and I did not see Admiral Morison's book until it came out of the press. I have not as yet read it. I am part of the way through it but time has not permitted finishing it.

Admiral Morison's volume is written largely upon some previously completed drafts of the battle for Leyte Gulf, written originally in 1946, '47, and '48, by a historian named

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Captain J. Joseph Sullivan
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February 24, 1959

Peter Salamon. I think both you and Admiral Oldendorf may know him because Salamon was with Admiral Wilkinson with the Third Amphibious Force, where he was given much information.

I saw some of Salamon's original drafts many years ago, but I haven't seen any since. When I asked Admiral Morison to see them, he seemed reluctant; and, therefore, I did not see them.

Admiral Morison's book covers Admiral Morison's opinion of the whole Leyte campaign based on his own research and that of his staff. He tends to credit me with a large part of his writings; but I don't think that this is so because, although he had the draft of my Surigao Strait, which I was writing at the time, he did not consult me thereon. Once in a while he asked a question; but largely he figured it out for himself, although he was guided in part by his assistant, Rear Admiral Bern Anderson, USN (Ret.).

There are a number of items, therefore, in his write up which are not right; and I am going to list them as I finish the book and advise him thereon. Among those I have already encountered are:

a). The statement that the Third Section (Nishimura) and the Center Force (Kurita) were to arrive at Leyte Gulf together.

This was untrue for the plan called for the Third Section to arrive off Tacloban at about 04:30 and the Center Force to arrive there about an hour and a half to two hours later.

b). The statement that the destroyer attacks were fine.

In my opinion they were not all fine because some of the destroyers did not close the enemy but instead fired at long ranges. In this connection, it will be remembered that the destroyers and the D.E.'s screening the C.V.E.'s in the battle off Samar closed the enemy in broad daylight and together succeeded in assisting in driving them off, even at heavy cost to themselves.

(c) A statement that destroyer division X-ray was delayed because Admiral Oldendorf did not warn the commander to be ready: This is a very extraordinary statement; for in battle, everyone must be ready for an immediate attack, and Admiral Oldendorf's orders were correct. ComDesDiv X-ray did not carry them out properly.

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Captain J. Joseph Sullivan
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The above are only some of the disagreements I have with Admiral Morison's write up.

On the other hand, I think Admiral Morison writes very well; and I think that he wrote the battle of Surigao Strait in a fair manner. In fact, Vice Admiral J. L. (Reg) Kauffman told me at the time of the Army-Navy game that he thought Morison had written up Oldendorf very well, indeed; but he had not been overkindly to Kinkaid.

In this connection Admiral Halsey is not particularly pleased with his write up therein, and his staff are considering the matter. They have been to see me twice.

I had the historian of the Navy read my final volume--the one which contains the Surigao account--and he told me that he thought that it was very fine and very fair. Vice Admiral John Sylvester, who reviewed my original draft several years ago, said the same thing.

It is a very unhappy thing when people become touchy about their positions in history. I suppose that it will always be so; but it makes it difficult for historians to keep on the beam when the sources of information are often confused and off the beam. Both Admiral Oldendorf and I knew this; and we endeavored to make our reports as true as possible.

What historians write about me, or about Admiral Oldendorf, or about others, is their responsibility and not mine. I refuse to be responsible for Admiral Morison's opinions just as I hope he is not responsible for mine.

I think that Admiral Morison's books are very well thought of. They are not necessarily entirely factual, as I pointed out above, but they give a broad general picture to the American people of the conduct of the Naval operations in World War II.

With hopes that I will see you soon and with best regards to you and your family, I am, as every, your old friend,

Sincerely,

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)

rwb/bjg

0291

Bohemian Club
624 Taylor Street
San Francisco, California
February 24, 1959

The Honorable George Murphy
The Recorders Court of the
City of Detroit
Detroit, Michigan

Dear George:

I received your letter with considerable surprise because in writing to you I had no intention that you would be in any way concerned in my Detroit plans. I had hoped to see you, but I had--more than that--contemplated looking over the automobile field.

I am a General Motors man and, shall I say, always have been. However, it could be that a Ford, or a Lincoln, if the price is right--you notice I am using the subjunctive mood because the price may not be right--might be an appropriate change.

I would be interested in knowing what reduction I might get if I got a Lincoln, or shall we say a Thunderbird Ford, because in the end the automobiles are roughly the same and the question is always the price.

It is awfully nice of you to write me about it; it is even nicer of you to interest yourself in my behalf; and it will be even nicer if I succeeded in obtaining a suitable car at a suitable price.

I always like to hear from you; it is a breath of old times.

With best regards to you, I am

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)

rwb/bjg

0292

12 Mount Vernon Street
Newport, Rhode Island
April 2, 1959

Memorial Stadium Fund
United States Naval Academy
Annapolis, Maryland

Gentlemen:

I desire to dedicate one chair to now
Vice-Admiral Harvey E. Overesch, USN (Ret.),
formerly Captain of the Naval Academy football
team in 1914.

Admiral Overesch is a member of the
class of 1915.

A check for One Hundred (\$100.00)
Dollars is enclosed herewith.

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)

rwb/bjg
Enclosure

0293

February 25, 1959

Dear Howard:

I haven't your local address, so I am sending this note to you by Roy Belcher. I hope that you get it.

I read your letter with interest relating to the Iceland situation, and I reported part of the matter to Admiral Burke. I received a reply which was not all embracing and was clearly written in part by a member of his staff. They are trying to do something about it but are not doing too well in my opinion.

I hope that you will not be so unwise as to endeavor to stand up for some others who were with you on that ship when you received the ordinary fitness report. Why the reports of the others were ordinary you do not really know and are not qualified to comment. My suggestion to you, therefore, is let the Captain concerned do as he will as regards you; but don't give him any advise regarding others because if you do, it may spoil all. You are the one entitled to the correction, and let it go at that.

I hope all is well with you and your family. I am sorry I am not in Newport to see you, as I should like to talk to you greatly. However, life, be as it is, while you are in Newport, I will be in Honolulu, Hawaii. In fact, I leave on Friday, February 26, for two weeks' stay.

Best regards to everyone, I am

Very truly yours,

(The Old Goat)

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)

rwb/bjg

Commander Howard Cole
c/o Commander Roy Belcher
Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island

0294

February 25, 1959

Dear Spencer:

I received your letter in good time at the Bohemian Club; and I was, needless to say, pleased to receive it, but concerned about it.

I was sorry to learn that you had lost the fine job at the JCS. I had felt that you had an analytical head and would fit in that assignment very well. Why you lost it, I do not know; but I would give in part that you made a technical error in telling everyone of the job you were going to get. I say this advisedly because there are a few top jobs available every year, and this appears to have been one of them.

No doubt, someone eased you out of it because he heard that you were getting it. When Admiral Theobald got command a little ahead of his time, although I was his aide, he refused to tell me about it on the ground that any leak would eventually get to someone strong enough to take it from him.

That stuff about Vice Admiral Ingersoll in getting you out of his hair is, so far as I know, sheer poppycock. Now that you know it, also, I hope that you will discover one day who did it.

I am afraid that I won't be back until after you have all left. I am en route to Hawaii on Friday, February 26, to remain there about two weeks. Unfortunately, although the weather on my arrival was pretty good, it has been raining steadily until yesterday; so I have decided to go to the South Seas to lie on the shore and observe the wahines.

I will probably be back before Robertson leaves. I am glad he has a job that I think he will like. That job has plenty of responsibility and Robbie will enjoy it.

I have seen Phil on several occasions, but he has now gone away for a holiday; and as I will be away when

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February 25, 1959

he gets back, I won't see him for several weeks. My guess is that I will be back in Newport in early April.

Take care of yourself. I hope that you and your family are well. Give my best regards to your assistants; I like them all.

With warmest regards and hopes that you get an assignment commensurate with your abilities, I am, as ever,

Yours sincerely,

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)

rw/bjg

Colonel Spencer Berger, USMC
Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island

0296

25 February 1959

Dear Henry:

I finally received Burke's reply to my letter relative to jobs he might take upon leaving the office to CNO and upon my concepts regarding the improvement in the education of our officers.

I am not impressed with his reply, although a number of competent people to whom I have shown it think that it is pretty good.

I feel that he did not reply fully, but, instead, took a phase of the letter and blew that up to the exclusion of the others.

Naturally, I think that the moral factor is important in war; and I am pleased to note that they are doing something on it.

I agree that it is important for the commands to integrate into their training programs both the technical and moral principles of leadership; but what I was driving at was the necessity for the improvement of professional judgment in command and for the superior education of the officers likely to command or to serve on competent staffs. Unfortunately, at this time many of our top commanders have had little education whatsoever along these lines and have had to learn the hard way, sometimes at considerable cost to the nation.

I note, also, that he had not commented upon my suggestion that he relieve Admiral Wright, or, failing that, to join one of the high-level, largely collegiate panels which are studying command decisions, strategy, logistics, and other vital factors.

I have had a very nice three weeks out here, visiting my family largely; but I am en route to Hawaii on Friday, February 26, to rest for a couple of weeks.

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Upon my return I hope to go to the desert in southern California for about a week and then plan to return to Newport in early April.

I hope you and Isy are in fine fettle.

With warmest personal regards to you and to Isy, I am, as ever, your old friend,

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)

rwb/bjg
Enclosure

P.S. Please hold on to Burke's reply and give me same upon my return.

Rear Admiral Henry Eccles, USN (Ret.)
Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island

0298

25 February 1959

Dear Slim:

I was very pleased to receive the photograph of me, which you took at your office. Actually, I think that it is quite good, and most people who know me feel likewise.

Of course, I am really a young fellow; and all pictures, for some reason, show me with gray hair. Your pictures do the same.

Yesterday I was at lunch at the Bohemian Club; and there was a small group, one of whom was a Captain of the Navy from Colombia, South America, whose name was difficult to remember and I have already forgotten it. He knew Captain Robertson and spoke quite well of him.

I showed your picture to the Captain, and I mentioned that it is too bad that Kodak is so honest; I had thought that I had pure brown hair. With that the Captain, who did not speak English very well, laughed and said, "You know, in Colombia most people's hair is black with very little gray. We have all noticed that Americans get gray hair very early."

So there you are! I am going to complain no more the accuracy of your Kodak because, evidently, ~~they~~ ^{it is} ~~are~~ right.

^{quite} I had lunch yesterday with ^{Germany} ~~Germany~~ ^{Curtis} and then I went over to Treasure Island. It was all very pleasant, and he is the same nice fellow as always.

In the forenoon I saw George Russell, who enjoys his work here greatly and who has become one of the star performers at the Bohemian Club because of his musical ability.

I am leaving for Hawaii tomorrow to be gone for several weeks. California, while it started out

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25 February 1959

awfully well with me, suddenly got cold and rained until yesterday. So I have decided to go on to Hawaii to dry out.

Everyday, when I can, I look at the Newport, or shall I say the Boston, temperatures and have noted that they were generally pretty low. I realize that without wind this is not too bad. Nevertheless, in the newspapers it looks worse than it actually is.

I hope that you and Jo are enjoying the winter despite the above comments and that things are going along very well with you.

I certainly hope that you enjoyed dining at the Lyman-s with Mr. Wickes. As I told you, he is an old friend of mine in both ways, i.e., length of time and age.

I received a letter yesterday from Charlie Willis, who was the head of Alaska Airlines. If you will remember, he came to the War College last year during Global Strategy. He is very anxious to return again and says that Admiral Bergen recommended him to you. I haven't answered it but shall do so shortly. He is a pretty able man and I think has considerable prospects for the future. The thing I like most about him is that although he is a Harvey Firestone son-in-law he is doing everything on his own and seeking no aid whatsoever from his father.

Naturally, what you decide to do about this is entirely your own problem, and I personally thank that it would have been better had he written to you rather than to me.

I don't know why it is, but for some reason businessmen seem to feel that they can accomplish more by writing to friends rather than to the President; possibly because the President to them is a little too high.

Once again, with best regards to you and Jo. I shall be returning in early April, at which time I look forward to seeing you and Jo again and renewing a friendship which has lasted over many years.

As ever, your old friend,

Very truly yours,

VAdm. S.H. Ingersoll, USN
President, US Naval War
College
Newport, Rhode Island

R. W. BATES
Read Admiral, USN (Ret.)

0300

12 Mount Vernon Street
Newport, Rhode Island

April 2, 1959

Rear Admiral S. E. Morison, USNR
44 Brimmer Street
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Sam:

Yesterday I visited Admiral Nimitz and discovered that he is working on a film about John Paul Jones. I was quite interested in this and told him that you were writing what I thought would be the final word thereon, and I was sorry that he (Admiral Nimitz) was wasting his time with an inferior product.

The Admiral then showed me a letter from you to him wherein you stated that you did not think that you would like the film.

All of this reminded me that a gentleman, whom I consider to be intellectual and understanding, told me, and I know that he also told Admiral Nimitz, that he wasn't sold on John Paul Jones at all. The gentleman stated that, while he recognized that John Paul Jones was a great fighting man and had contributed greatly to the success of the Revolution, he also recognized that John Paul Jones was an opportunist, fought for any Flag so long as he could be in battle or in the limelight, and wasn't really loyal to any country.

He said that he wasn't alone in this view, that there were a lot of people who had been wondering at the extraordinary adulation that the Navy had given Jones over the years.

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Rear Admiral S. E. Morison, USNR
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To this Admiral Nimitz replied that John Paul Jones had made it possible to supply Washington's armies. This was a new idea to me because I have never heard of one ship having that effect in any recent war--although the Merrimac came near it for a few minutes. I hope that you have explored this, as I would like to talk to you about it.

The gentleman was much more definite than I am here. I know that he surprised Admiral Nimitz, who doesn't seem to have given this phase of the matter much thought.

Exactly what you have discovered about Paul Jones' relations with Catherine of Russia I don't know. But I recollect that in my readings John Paul Jones made a great error when he extolled to Catherine the Russian Commander-in-Chief in the Black Sea when, in fact, he thought the Russian Commander-in-Chief was pretty bad. This praise from Jones caused Catherine to "fire" him.

I will be back in Newport in a couple of weeks, and perhaps you will be there. If you are, I shall be most happy to see you and your beloved Priscilla.

I have had quite a holiday, having spent several weeks in California, about three weeks in Hawaii, and one week in the desert, i.e., Palm Springs. Therefore, to quote the Naval Academy song, I am ready for "a frolic or a fuss."

Best regards and congratulations on your book, Leyte Gulf, which, while it contains some minor errors, is outstanding. In fact, many people have told me that they found it highly interesting and were satisfied that it is about the last word on the battle.

You will find that some of the commanders won't agree with some of your comments. I haven't communicated with any of them since the book was printed, but I wouldn't be at all surprised if every commander concerned, anxious to keep his name in favor before the public and history, will write and suggest some modifications. In fact,

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Rear Admiral S. E. Morison, USN
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I have heard that Oldendorf has already done so. I had planned to see him in Los Angeles, as I have a great affection for him; but unfortunately I got sick and had to return to San Francisco, where my brother, a doctor, resides.

Best regards. As ever, your old friend,

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)

rwb/bjg

0303